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THE UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS CITY
KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI

OFFICE OF
THE PRESIDENT

October 18, 1954

Dear Mr. Dulles:

The University of Kansas City is very much interested in establishing a Russian Center, as described in the attached Prospectus.

I have been informed that the Central Intelligence Agency might be interested in such a project. If so, would you kindly let me know under what circumstances.

Sincerely yours,


Earl J. McGrath
President

Mr. Allen Dulles
Central Intelligence Agency
Washington, D.C.

PROSPECTS CONCERNING A RUSSIAN STUDIES CENTER

This proposal concerns the development at the University of Kansas City of a Russian Studies Center to stimulate and aid the study of all aspects of Russian society in high schools, colleges and universities, and adult organizations. While certain phases of the Center's work may be directed primarily at stimulating and servicing the study of the U.S.S.R. by Mid-West institutions and organizations, other phases--such as the development of study units for high schools--can be directed at wider, perhaps national, institutions and groups.

An emotional approach to Soviet society is dangerous. Only scholarly and comprehensive knowledge (based on primary sources) of the varied aspects of Soviet life and policies can provide a strong foundation for wise decisions. Although a few centers of Russian studies exist, they are mainly in the East. Moreover, they are dedicated almost exclusively to research or academic training within the universities. And yet, it is precisely in the Mid-West that the need for widespread, unbiased knowledge is the greatest.

In fulfilling its tasks, the Center would develop such activities as the following:

1. The education of adults in the area of Russian Studies through:

----cooperation with adult education agencies (such as the Greater Kansas City Adult Education Association and the American Foundation for Political Education) in the development of programs, in providing consultative and leadership services, and in training adult discussion leaders.

----organizing lectures, institutes, conferences and non-credit courses.

----developing materials for the mass media (e.g., radio programs, newspaper articles).

2. The education of high school students in the area of Russian Studies through:

----developing and providing study and resource units, materials, and bibliographies.

----providing consultative and other services for school systems.

----stimulation of and appropriate cooperation with higher educational institutions which train high school teachers. (Our own School of Education is already taking some steps in this direction.)

----analysis of current high school textbooks

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3. The education of college students in the area of Russian Studies through:

----conducting and publishing the results of research, particularly in fields and topics which are not the object of existing research.

----expanding Russian studies in our own general education program and in the various Divisions and Schools of the University, and stimulating Russian Studies at other higher educational institutions.

----contributing to the education of scholars in the field of Russian Studies.

4. Maintaining a research and service library and a materials center (maps, films, fugitive material, diagrams, etc). The collection will place special stress on foreign publications--Russian, Chinese, other Iron Curtain countries, and Western European countries.

5. Supplying information concerning different aspects of Soviet life (agriculture, technology, medicine, industry, art, literature, etc.) to institutions and persons having an interest in some special area or problem.

6. Publishing a Russian Digest consisting of translations and summaries of, or extracts from, important articles, documents and books in all areas of Russian Studies. This Digest will contribute to the fulfillment of the aims listed above.

The initial faculty and staff might include about six scholars who would, taken together, cover the areas of language and literature, science, politics, economics, sociology and anthropology, philosophy, and cultural institutions. A head librarian would be needed. In addition, it would be desirable to have a number of scholarships and fellowships available to promote the training of specialists in the several areas of Soviet Studies.